

POSTAGE-STAMPS.

On the 1st October last a special series of postage-stamps was issued to commemorate the Conference of the Federation of Chambers of Commerce of the British Empire, which for the first time was held in this Dominion. The stamps, which were in five denominations— $\frac{1}{2}$ d., 1d., $2\frac{1}{2}$ d., 4d., and 6d.—portrayed various phases of the Dominion's industrial and commercial activities.

The 1936 Health Stamp Campaign inaugurated by Your Excellency in a broadcast address on the 1st November last was the most successful yet undertaken, the total net sum raised for the Health Camp Fund being £14,500, an increase of over £2,700 on the previous year's total. This splendid result, achieved in the comparatively short period 2nd November to 16th January, is striking evidence of the generosity of the public in this worthy cause and of the efficient organization provided by officers of the Department and the Health Stamp Committees in various parts of the Dominion.

To commemorate the Coronation of Their Majesties King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, a special series of postage-stamps in three denominations—1d., $2\frac{1}{2}$ d., and 6d.—was issued on the 13th May last, and will remain on sale until the end of the year. The stamps, which are similar in design to the Jubilee issue of 1935, bear the portraits of Their Majesties in a border of Maori pattern.

For Niue and the Cook Islands, the New Zealand Coronation stamps were suitably overprinted. Those for Niue were issued simultaneously with the New Zealand set and those for the Cook Islands on the 1st June.

OCEAN MAIL-SERVICES.

The Auckland-Vancouver contract mail service, operated by vessels of the Canadian-Australasian Royal Mail Line, continues to be performed with regularity, but the Wellington-San Francisco mail contract terminated at the end of last year on the discontinuance of the service by the Union Steam Ship Co. Since the termination of the San Francisco service increased use has been made of the all-sea route for the despatch of mails for Great Britain and Europe.

AIR MAILS.

INLAND SERVICES.

The steady increase in the volume of mail matter carried on the inland air services reflects the growing appreciation by the public of the advantages of air transit for correspondence. In May, 1936 (two months after the Cook Strait and Palmerston North-Dunedin air-mail services were inaugurated) the number of letters conveyed weekly was 13,500, and this number increased to 16,800 in August, to 21,000 in December, and to 25,000 in March. At the end of July the number of letters carried on inland air-mail services (including the Auckland-Wellington service which commenced on the 27th June last) averaged 30,000 weekly.

ENGLAND-AUSTRALIA SERVICE.

That the air service operating twice weekly in each direction between England and Australia offers an advantageous alternative despatch for correspondence exchanged between New Zealand and Great Britain and intermediate countries is indicated by the steady increase in the number of letters carried, details of which are shown on page 19.

In connection with the scheme put forward in October, 1934, by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom for the carriage by air of all letters exchanged between Empire countries on the England-Australia and England-South Africa air routes, a conference of delegates representing the Governments of Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand was held at Wellington in September, 1936, to discuss the question of extending the service to New Zealand. The representatives of the three countries were:—

Great Britain: Mr. F. G. L. Bertram, C.B.E., and Mr. P. Liesching, C.M.G.

Australia: Sir Archdale Parkhill, K.C.M.G., M.P., Mr. M. L. Shepherd, C.M.G., I.S.O., Mr. H. P. Brown, C.M.G., M.B.E., Captain E. C. Johnston, D.F.C., and Mr. M. B. Harry.

New Zealand: The Hon. P. Fraser (Chairman of Conference), the Hon. W. Nash, the Hon. R. Semple, and the Hon. F. Jones.